



**General Certificate of Education  
June 2012**

**Communication and Culture**

**COMM3**

**Unit 3: Communicating Culture**

***Mark Scheme***

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**Generic Marking Grid**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Marks</b>	<b>AO1: This tests the ability of candidates to communicate in the register of communication and culture</b>	<b>Marks</b>	<b>AO2: This tests the ability of candidates to understand the content and concepts offered by the qualification</b>	<b>Marks</b>	<b>AO3: This tests the ability of candidates to apply knowledge</b>	<b>Marks</b>
		<i>This reflects the degree to which the candidate has extended their grasp of the discourse of the subject and/or produced effective communication in their chosen medium.</i>		<i>This reflects the degree to which the work provides evidence of further knowledge and understanding of the content and concepts of Communication and Culture</i>		<i>This reflects the degree to which the content of the work manages to provide insightful analysis of more sophisticated texts and situations.</i>	
4	31-40	Highly technical in its register and/or creative and/or proficient in its use of the chosen format.	4	Knowledge and understanding will be very good in terms of its range of knowledge and/or depth of understanding.	13-16	Analysis will be exploratory and open and will offer insights into its chosen theme.	16-20
3	21-30	Sound in terms of its range and control and good in terms of its effectiveness.	3	Level of knowledge and understanding will be secure and will evidence sound subject specialist knowledge.	9-12	Analysis will be good in the sense that it will offer a specific informed commentary on the candidate's cultural practices.	11-15
2	11-20	Limited vocabulary, perhaps only partly understood, rising to a degree of competence evidenced by the effective use of a fairly narrow range of terms/concepts.	2	Evidence will range from a limited, largely non-specialist relevance through to a simple but competent grasp of Communication and Culture content.	5-8	Analysis will rise from being of limited use through to the establishing of competence.	6-10
1	1-10	Basic, non-technical and unconvincing.	1	Evidence will be basic, non-specific and unconvincing.	1-4	Analysis will be ineffective or unduly derivative.	1-5

**UNIT 3: COMMUNICATING CULTURE**

**MARK SCHEME (June 2012)**

**Question 1**

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Online social networking has had an enormous impact on contemporary culture. There is a great potential for all of us with internet access to join communities of shared interest in every possible subject or just keep in touch with our friends. However, there are competing views on how to interpret the broader cultural implications of social networking. Some stress the positive and empowering aspects whilst others have highlighted negative effects on both the individual and culture at large.

Carefully read **Argument A** and **Argument B** (opposite) relating to social networking, before attempting the task below.

**Task:**

Use your knowledge of selected theoretical perspectives and key concepts to evaluate the contrasting views of social networking expressed by Argument A **and** Argument B.

*(40 marks)*

**Argument A**

Online social networking is a fine example of the way in which technology can respond to a real human need; in this case, the need for better, faster and more sophisticated interpersonal and group communication. Online networking does not just improve social connectivity; it enables knowledge to be pooled rapidly and efficiently so that businesses can work more effectively even if workers are geographically dispersed. Social network sites encourage creative self-expression. We can combine speech, music, writing and moving images to project ourselves as individuals and as groups.

**Argument B**

Increasingly, our identities are projected to others not by face-to-face contact but via our presence on online social networking sites. But social networks do not just help us to communicate; they are changing the ways in which we think. We experiment with our identities, but only in ways that are determined by consumer culture. We describe ourselves in terms of what we own and consume and become addicted to the giving and receiving of tiny pieces of unimportant information. As the information content becomes smaller and smaller, so our ability to concentrate on more demanding forms of communication like the book or play or film diminishes. The idea that we are part of communities enjoying real relationships is an illusion based only in the virtual world. In reality, social networking encourages an unhealthy obsession with the self.

Level	Descriptor
4 (31 - 40 marks)	<p><b>Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions.</b></p> <p>Responses at this level fully engage with the stimulus material, recognising contrasting and comparative elements. There is clear and convincing evidence of an evaluative approach; evidence which may be biased towards the effective use of practical examples or towards cogent argument. Theoretical and conceptual material is confidently applied in the context of the task.</p>
3 (21 - 30 marks)	<p><b>Likely to demonstrate a firm grasp of the contrasting points of view as exemplified by the two arguments. Conducts a reasonably wide-ranging and well-informed discussion around the issues. May focus on the variety of contexts suggested in the two arguments.</b></p> <p>These sound responses demonstrate an awareness of issues raised by the stimulus material. There is some evidence of an evaluative approach which may focus on either argument or practical examples. Some theoretical perspectives are applied relevantly and there is evidence of an ability to approach the task at a conceptual level.</p>
2 (11 - 20 marks)	<p><b>Likely to work through the given texts in a straightforward way with limited evaluation.</b></p> <p>At this level, responses tend towards description rather than analysis or evaluation. Perspectives and/or key concepts are likely to feature in the range 16-20, but application of these in the range 11-15 is likely to be limited, inappropriate or based on misunderstanding of basic principles.</p>
1 (1-10 marks)	<p><b>Candidates respond superficially and/or insubstantially to the invitation in the question, typically by rewording the question.</b></p> <p>Little understanding of the arguments put forward in the stimulus material is evident here. Conceptual material is either absent, severely limited or totally inappropriate in its application. The range 1-5 includes those accounts which are too short to constitute a serious response.</p>
0	No relevant response.

**Section B**

The **Cultural Sites** referred to in this section are: Spaces and Places, Fictions and Objects of Desire.

**Question 2**

<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>
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Drawing on a detailed case study, show how **two** of the three sites of culture are interlinked.

(40 marks)

Level	Descriptor
4 (31 - 40 marks)	<p><b>Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions. Thorough and contrasting analysis.</b></p> <p>The case study is detailed, appropriate, thoroughly well understood and analysed. Responses demonstrate an informed awareness of the two cultural sites as well as relationships between them (the intersection). The response draws widely and convincingly on key concepts and clearly contrasting theoretical perspectives. However, the systematic and comprehensive application of <b>all</b> perspectives and key concepts is not expected.</p>
3 (21 - 30 marks)	<p><b>Likely to focus on the close analysis of a suitable case study as a way of demonstrating the intersection between two sites of culture.</b></p> <p>A competent analysis of contrasting products and/or practices contributes to a convincing demonstration of an understanding of the relationship between cultural sites. Both of the relevant cultural sites are featured. The discussion uses theoretical perspectives and key concepts convincingly.</p>
2 (11 - 20 marks)	<p><b>Likely to focus on what was learnt rather than what was understood. Likely to come to easy conclusions without arguing through the case. Unfounded assertions.</b></p> <p>Offers analysis of examples with limited consideration of the contribution these make to an understanding of the interlinking of the sites. Grasp of key concepts may be vague or incomplete. In the upper half of the level there is likely to be some attempt to apply theoretical approaches and/or concepts but in the range 11-15 these may be limited or inappropriate in their application. Limitations in theoretical understanding may be compensated by the quality of descriptive examples, or vice versa. Answers that consider the two chosen cultural sites separately rather than the intersection between them are unlikely to achieve marks above the lower half of this level.</p>
1 (1-10 marks)	<p><b>Uncritical explanation of the question. Little else offered.</b></p> <p>Examples may be present but flawed. Very limited conception of the relationship between the cultural sites (intersection). Conceptual material is either absent, severely limited or totally inappropriate in its application. The range 1-5 includes those accounts which are too short to constitute a serious response.</p>
0	No relevant response.

**Question 3**

<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>
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Choose **one** of the three cultural sites. Which theoretical approach to this site have you found most convincing and why?

(40 marks)

<b>Level</b>	<b>Descriptor</b>
4 (31 - 40 marks)	<p><b>Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions (eg establish criteria for evaluation).</b></p> <p>Clear, confident understanding of selected theoretical approaches in the context of a chosen cultural site. Key concepts are incorporated into well-informed, convincing explanations with strong emphasis on the evaluation of a particular approach. Responses are likely to be well illustrated with telling examples of cultural practices and/or cultural products.</p>
3 (21 - 30 marks)	<p><b>Likely to lead with a thorough exploration of selected theoretical approaches linked to the chosen site. Concepts are likely to be used as analytical/interpretive tools.</b></p> <p>Makes a reasonable attempt to evaluate rather than describe a theoretical approach in the context of the chosen site. Responses are likely to be illustrated with appropriate examples of cultural practices and/or cultural products. Key concepts used in support of coherent arguments.</p>
2 (11 - 20 marks)	<p><b>Likely to offer evidence of study of a specific site and then to attempt to engage with discourse and/or mode of address in this context.</b></p> <p>Some understanding is evident of the chosen cultural site but at this level responses may struggle to offer convincing explanations of why one theoretical approach rather than another is 'more convincing'. There may be some limitations in theoretical understanding. In the upper half of this level, the suitability of practical examples may compensate for conceptual knowledge, but in the range 11-15 anecdotal, vague or inappropriate evidence is likely to predominate.</p>
1 (1-10 marks)	<p><b>Limited response to question, which results in unsupported assertions.</b></p> <p>In the upper part of the range (6-10) there is some attempt to engage either with a legitimate cultural site or with theoretical approaches. Conceptual material is either absent, severely limited or totally inappropriate in its application. The range 1-5 includes those accounts which are too short to constitute a serious response.</p>
0	No relevant response.

**Question 4**

<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>
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'Every building, every environment has a story to tell.'  
 Explore the role of narrative in the understanding of **spaces and places**.

(40 marks)

Level	Descriptor
4 (31 - 40 marks)	<p><b>Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions.</b></p> <p>The key concept <i>narrative</i> is thoroughly well understood and suitably applied in the context of the question. Examples chosen are apposite and clearly contrasting. Case study examples as well as conceptual material are integrated into a well informed discussion with a strong focus on the question. There is clear evidence of an ability to read critically in relation to examples of spaces and places.</p>
3 (21 - 30 marks)	<p><b>Likely to focus on the issues of the question: the relationships between spaces and places and narrative.</b></p> <p>At this level responses are able to engage at a conceptual level but the implications of the question may not be fully grasped. Examples of spaces and places are thoroughly explored with clear evidence of the candidate's ability to 'read' such texts. There is an attempt to explore the notion that spaces and places have 'a story to tell' but responses may struggle with the full implications of <i>narrative</i>, particularly in the lower half of the level.</p>
2 (11 - 20 marks)	<p><b>Likely to focus on specific examples of spaces and places, which have formed the basis of their preparation for this examination.</b></p> <p>At this level, responses are likely to offer generalised readings of examples with only limited consideration of <i>narrative</i>. For marks in the upper part of the level (16-20) there should normally be some attempt to deploy relevant concepts. In the range 11-15, description is likely to predominate over analysis.</p>
1 (1-10 marks)	<p><b>Responses lack any real understanding of the terms of reference of the question. Likely to focus exclusively and anecdotally on personal experience.</b></p> <p>Conceptual material is either absent, severely limited or totally inappropriate in its application. The range 1-5 includes those accounts which are too short to constitute a serious response.</p>
0	No relevant response.



**Question 5**

<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>
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'Imaginary worlds teach us how to interpret the real world.'  
Do you agree with this view of **fictions**?

(40 marks)

Level	Descriptor
4 (31 - 40 marks)	<p><b>Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions.</b></p> <p>Key concepts suggested by the question, particularly <i>narrative</i> and <i>ideology</i>, are thoroughly understood and explored in the context of the question. The discussion is well informed by contrasting theoretical approaches and well illustrated by apposite examples. There is a clear focus on the contention of the quotation. Ideas are supported by evidence and argument.</p>
3 (21 - 30 marks)	<p><b>Likely to use key concepts and theoretical approaches appropriately. Discussion includes references to theories and theorists.</b></p> <p>Examples are relevant and appropriate. Well informed discussion, with some attempt to engage directly with the implications of the quotation. In the upper half of the level there is acknowledgement of the ideological or didactic roles of fiction. In the lower half of the level responses may restrict themselves to a limited interpretation of this quotation.</p>
2 (11 - 20 marks)	<p><b>Likely to identify specific examples and use them as a starting point for a discussion or use generalised examples to conduct an exploration of fictions with limited acknowledgement of the specificity of the question. Likely to focus on examples rather than arguments.</b></p> <p>Some understanding of 'fictions' as a cultural site and of the relationship between selected examples, probably at a personal level. In the upper half of the level there is evidence of analysis but in the lower half description and uncontextualised personal responses are likely to predominate.</p>
1 (1-10 marks)	<p><b>Struggles to understand what the question demands.</b></p> <p>Conceptual material is either absent, severely limited or totally inappropriate in its application. The range 1-5 includes those accounts which are too short to constitute a serious response.</p>
0	No relevant response.

**N.B.** Answers may be rewarded for querying or debating the question's implication that **fictions** (as a site of culture) is restricted to 'imaginary worlds'.

**Question 6**

<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>
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'What I own is who I am.'  
Discuss this view of **objects of desire**.

(40 marks)

Level	Descriptor
4 (31 - 40 marks)	<p><b>Likely to explore and/or challenge theoretical positions.</b></p> <p>The implications of the statement are thoroughly understood and explored. The relationship between objects of desire and identity is thoroughly well understood. Convincing arguments and explanations are well supported by evidence. The discussion is well-informed by conceptual material and apposite examples.</p>
3 (21 - 30 marks)	<p><b>Likely to lead with the key concept <i>identity</i> in relation to objects of desire. Evidence of reasonable level of theoretical understanding.</b></p> <p>Responses at this level demonstrate a good understanding of 'objects of desire' as a site for the study of cultural products and practices. Well informed discussions draw on a range of relevant case studies/examples. Some evidence is provided to suggest an understanding of different theoretical approaches/theorists.</p>
2 (11 - 20 marks)	<p><b>Likely to lead with the experiences of products and practices and work back towards the question with broad, generalised examples.</b></p> <p>Some understanding of 'objects of desire' as a cultural site is evident here. For the marks in the upper part of the level (16-20) there are relevant references to identity. Discussion may be one-sided rather than balanced in its assessment of the view expressed in the question. In the range 11-15, description is likely to predominate over analysis.</p>
1 (1-10 marks)	<p><b>Likely to focus anecdotally on personal experience. Struggles to cope with the demands of the question.</b></p> <p>Conceptual material is either absent, severely limited or totally inappropriate in its application. The range 1-5 includes those accounts which are too short to constitute a serious response.</p>
0	No relevant response.